CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

Minutes of Meeting 03-02

held

Friday, March 21, 2003, 2:00 p.m., H-769

Present:	N. Esmail (Chair)	A.M. Hanna	M.D. Pugh
	R. Bhat	L. Harris	L. Quesnel
	M.Y. Chen	J.E. Jans	A.S. Ramamurthy
	J. Daigle	F. Khendek	P. Regimbald
	R. DiCesare	K. Khorasani	N. Shiri-Varnaamkhaasti
	C. Dickie-Clark	W.E. Lynch	C.W. Trueman
	M. Di Pietrantonio	M.K. Mehmet Ali	G.H. Vatistas
	R. Dssouli	O. Moselhi	R. Zmeureanu
	T. Fancott	C. Paradisis	S. de Souza
	R. Ganesan	O.A. Pekau	(Recording Secretary)

Observers: S. Ghaderpanah   L. Zack

Regrets: T.D. Bui

1.   Adoption of Agenda

A revised agenda was distributed.

**Motion
03-02-01**

That the revised agenda be adopted (O. Moselhi, T. Fancott)

Vote: Carried unanimously

2.   Adoption of Minutes

Two corrections were identified:
- Page 6, paragraph 3: The Chair explained that there are plans for a Faculty Awards <u>Night</u>.
- Page 2, Space Needs, last paragraph: This space is specially reserved for Mechanical <u>and Industrial</u> Engineering.

**Motion
03-02-02**

That the Minutes of Meeting 03-01 (January 24, 2003) be adopted, as corrected (M. Pugh, R. Dssouli)

Vote: Carried unanimously

3.   <u>Chair's Remarks</u>

The Chair introduced Ms. Mary Di Pietrantonio, Assistant to the Dean. He explained that there has been a change in the Dean's Office. In the previous arrangement, the Dean had an Executive Assistant and an Executive Secretary. He added the new position because of the complexity as explained in his memo, whereby Ms. Clara Paradisis has assumed the position of Director of Faculty Administration leaving him without assistance. So Mary has been hired as the Dean's Assistant and will be attending all Council meetings.

<u>Admissions</u>

The Chair said that it was pertinent to watch the enrolment figures which presently correspond to the number of applications received. Through these applications we can monitor the interest in our programs. As it is difficult to monitor this interest relative to last year's figures (there was a major difficulty in admitting new students), the numbers are compared to those two years earlier. Thus, compared to a similar week in 2001, today's total applications are down by 3%. This is not bad news. 2001 saw the highest number of class entries. Nonetheless, there appears to be a reasonable redistribution of enrolment inside the Faculty. Although Computer Science and Computer Engineering applications compared to 2001 are down by 34-35%, the other programs are up. Software Engineering has the same level of applications, Civil Engineering and Building Engineering have a 50%-100% increase, Mechanical Engineering about 40% increase, Industrial Engineering 35% increase. Therefore, the increase and decrease appear between the same population of students.

<u>Accreditation</u>

We have received the preliminary report following the Accreditation visit. We are seeking accreditation for 6 programs. The Faculty and the Departments are working on the response to the program visitors' comments and the deadline to present the rebuttal to the comments is the end of the month. The Chair said that at the present time he is not in a position to discuss the details of the Report but there are some issues that have to be dealt with. Open discussions will take place at the appropriate time.

<u>New Building</u>

The Chair said that the new building is on schedule. The cold weather caused a delay of 2-3 weeks as the cranes were unable to operate. Moving will begin between fall 2004 and winter 2005 and will be done in stages. However, the Chair cautioned that when the moving is announced, and regardless of one's position, faculty members must make plans around the different moving phases.

<u>Faculty Information Technology</u>

The Chair remarked that the Faculty Information Technology group activity has accelerated. A Faculty Information Technology Council has been set up with representatives from each information technology group in the departments. The purpose is to achieve a number of objectives, one of which is to establish and control the network in the new building. Each room in the new building will have

two outlets, one controlled by IITS and the other will be for the internal Faculty network to ensure that our educational needs are met through the internal building network. The Council will be responsible for servicing all the labs. The labs will be located on the 8th floor and a large portion of the 9th floor in the Hall building. We also need specialists in many areas and to avoid duplication of these groups, the Chair noted that a Faculty-wide effort would be appropriate.

Support Staff
In the departments, support-staffing needs are being met in two directions:
1) increasing the number of staff; and 2) restructuring the staff.

The following appointments have been made:
- Department Administrator in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Department Administrator in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
- 2 Graduate Student Advisors, one in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the other in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering

10-15 Systems Analysts are being hired, some in the departments and some in the network.

We also need to hire the last group of professorial staff to meet the program needs.

Enrolment
The objective is not to increase enrolment indefinitely. The Chair remarked that this year, we have about 4100 ftes; the headcount is 6700. This is the highest number of ftes we can achieve. We cannot handle more than this. If we were to chart a corridor of 3100-4100 ftes in the next 10-15 years this is the level at which the Faculty should operate. We should not have less than 3400 ftes or else the structure would not be viable and we would be unable to support the professoriate and the support staff. The red point is 3400 ftes. With 4100 ftes we can have all the needed equipment, research support and good programs to maintain an excellent Faculty.

Question Period
A member remarked that high furniture obstructs the view of the blackboard. The inclusion of faculty members in the respective committee was advocated.

Another idea was the use of white boards in classrooms. It was pointed out that this suggestion was already in the plans.

Other suggestions included the use of glass doors or glass panels in the upper part of the offices and the use of customized telephone rings. It was reported that these suggestions would be brought to the attention of the respective committee.

To a query on the 3% enrolment reduction, the Chair affirmed that it pertained to undergraduate enrolment.

The Chair added that the Government of Quebec has announced the final solution for financing. The Engineering undergraduate programs will be financed with 2.33 units (increase from 1.77 units). Computer Science was raised to 1.21 units. However, the victim of this system is graduate studies. In the traditional system, the second cycle which was at 5.05 units, has now been decreased to 3.75 units. The Chair remarked that this is a significant drop in the financing of Masters students. The level of Ph.D. financing remains the same. Moreover, the population in the Masters program in Quebec is larger than that in the Ph.D. program. If this drop is passed to the Faculty, the Chair said that it may entail a $3-$3.5 million reduction in the budget. However, the Chair was assured that this would not be passed to the Faculty for at least one year. The Chair noted that a reform was needed. He has already talked to the professors in Computer Science. He added that the Chair of the Computer Science Department, Dr. Radhakrishnan, will soon be returning, following his sick leave.

The Chair asked if it is feasible to continue the practice of allowing M.A.Sc. students to complete their 2-year program of study, and then do Ph.D. research. As the financing of a Masters student has devalued by about 40% in cost, it may be economically advantageous to replace Masters students by Ph.D. students. He inquired whether those Masters students who showed promise, should be retained in the Masters program for a 1-year trial period, and then transferred to the Ph.D. program which is more beneficial. Professors were asked to reflect on this idea. The Department of Computer Science has the choice of attracting more students to the Software Engineering program. To have a healthy Faculty, Computer Science should be a strong department and bring in revenues equal to the other departments. He suggested making the Software Engineering program more attractive, being more open to students, and serving more Engineering students than Computer Science students. This also applies to the Diploma and the 2nd degree programs. The Chair added that the decrease in unit value in Computer Science also applies to the graduate programs. In the Masters program, engineering is 3.75 units whereas Computer Science is 2.65 units; in the Ph.D. program Engineering is 7.2 units and Computer Science is 5.7 units. The Chair felt that the Engineering lobby is reasonable but the Computer Science lobby is not as good.

4. ## Undergraduate Curriculum and Calendar Changes (ECFC Doc. 2003-02-01)

Dr. Khorasani presented the changes for approval.

Motion
03-02-03
That Document ECFC Doc. 2003-02-01 be approved
(K. Khorasani, R. Dssouli)

Dr. Khorasani walked the members through the document page by page.

Page 1 clarifies the maximum number of ESL courses that can be used in a program for degree credit.

Page 2 applies to a change in admission requirement for the Software Systems Option.

Pages 3 and 4 deal with academic regulations. The objective of this change is to clarify the responsibilities and requirements of students in Failed Standing. The following modification to the text on page 3 was made:
'Failure to meet the criteria for acceptable or conditional standing, or remaining in conditional standing over two consecutive assessments'.

The Chair observed that the letter grading system is not connected to the percentile ranking system. A member explained that formerly the University Calendar indicated the equivalence of the percentage mark to the Grade Point Average. A guideline does exist. The Chair said that according to CEAB, we have a devalued grading system which needs improvement. In his response to CEAB, the Chair has chosen to defend our system which works. The system has many elements. However, the Chair added that equity and fairness to students must apply to all classes and to all multi-section courses, too. An improvement in the coordination of courses is needed, he remarked. We have to ensure that the grade D, C, or A, is within reason and within a certain range throughout the Faculty. A description of the letter grade is needed. The Chair added that the issue has to be discussed and sent to the Department Think-Tank Groups; it should be a priority discussion in 2003.

Dr. Khorasani continued that pages 5 and 6 of Document ECFC 2003-02-01 deal with CIADI. Student members wanted their membership in the Institute acknowledged on their transcript. Also, two courses are being introduced, IADI-301 Undergraduate Aerospace Industry Project I (0 credits) and IADI-401 Undergraduate Aerospace Industry Project II (0 credits). The rationale was explained. The following changes were made to the course descriptions:

IADI 301: to add in the course description 'A project will be assigned to each student'.
IADI 401: (1) to add in the course description 'A project will be assigned to each student', and (2) to change Undergraduate Program Coordinator to Capstone Project Coordinator.

Page 9: ELEC 498X-Computational Electromagnetics for Microwaves and Wireless Applications - It was explained that this course, proposed to be offered in the summer, is cross-listed with the graduate slot course. It was noted that the credit value (3 credits) should be mentioned.

A member pointed out that at an earlier Council meeting, it was generally agreed that slot courses be dealt with at the department level. The Chair responded that the every slot course must be forwarded to the Faculty Council for information purposes failing which the system could be affected. He added that this matter needed to be further debated and clarified.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

5. **Graduate Curriculum Changes (ECFC Doc. 2003-02-02)**

Dr. Vatistas presented the changes. Members were informed that all the courses proposed for approval were slot courses.

Motion
03-02-04

That Document ECFC Doc. 2003-02-02 be approved
(G. Vatistas, R. Bhat)

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
The following two slot courses were proposed:
ELEC 691X - Computational Electromagnetics for Microwaves and Wireless Applications
The following changes were recommended:
- to add the credit value (4 credits);
- to include mention of the project in the course description;
- to add lecture/project hours

ELEC 791X - New Trends in Wireless Communications
The credit value has to be added to the proposed description.

Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
The following three slot courses were proposed:
MECH 691X - Thermodynamics of Materials
The credit value has to be added to the proposed description

MECH 691E - Experimental Methods in Fluid Mechanics
Being a slot course, no change was presently proposed. However, fluid mechanics is also of interest to Civil Engineering students and it was noted that should this course become a permanent offering, the description would have to be modified to accommodate Civil Engineering students.

MECH 691O – Optical Microsystems

Vote: Carried unanimously

6. **Motion Regarding Peer Evaluations (ECFC Doc. 2003-02-03)**

The Chair asked if the motion had been brought to the attention of the Curriculum Committee. He remarked that the Council uses the services of its Curriculum Committee for advice. As the Council had been deprived of the Curriculum Committee's recommendation, it was suggested that the motion be tabled and returned to the Committee for advice. One member suggested that the motion also be brought to the attention of the Graduate Curriculum Committee. Another member proposed that the resolution be sent to the departments for debate because the departments have a lot of courses that have project work. The Chair agreed that the resolution should be discussed in the departments.

7. **Other Business**

There was no other business.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

/sd